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Conventional Signs for Sea and River Charts

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SUPPLEMENT TO
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THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES, WITHIN THE MEANING OF TITLE 18, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, OF THE U.S. CODE, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS TO OR RECEIPT BY AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. THE REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED.

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- The "Vodnyy Transport" gazette, issue No 52, of 1 Aug 53, carried a notice entitled "Conventional Signs for Sea and River charts." The theme of this article is as follows: Handbooks for navigators, entitled "Conventional Signs for Sea Charts and Maps" were published in the USSR and contain the following sections:

- (a) Conventional signs for sea charts and maps,
- (b) Conventional signs for river charts,
- (c) Conventional signs for topographic charts,
- (d) Prints and supplements.

In this guide, geographical objects on the land section are shown by the same signs by which they are represented on topographical charts. Topographical and sea charts thereby supplement each other.

2. Demarcation signs by scale are given in this guide also. On the principle of scaling sea charts and maps, these signs are distributed in three groups:

- (a) Signs reserved for maps and special charts private charts?
Scale 1:10,000 - 1:50,000
- (b) Signs reserved for road maps
Scale 1:100,000 - 1:500,000
- (c) Signs reserved for general maps ??
Scale 1:750,000 and smaller scale

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3. The newspaper article goes on to say that signs representing lighthouses and lights are being re-designed. Figures representing lights will be shown in their natural color and as a circle with a dot in the center of it as the light. If the light is two-colored, a circle of small diameter is given in one color and the outside circle is colored in the other color of the light. With three-colored lights the sequence in the coloring of the circles is determined by the distance the light is visible. The first circle (starting from the center) is colored in the color of the light which is visible for a great distance and everyone of the following circles is colored in the color of the lights in the order they decrease in distance visibility.
4. With regard to this article [redacted] in 1947 conventional signs for sea charts and maps were re-designed by the Hydrographic Bureau of the USSR Naval Forces. Subsequently the Hydrographic Bureau published the guidebook "Conventional Signs for Sea Charts and Maps," which is a revised and supplemented edition of the old guidebook. 25X1
5. In the USSR [redacted] (fnu) Polkovskiy, then head of the Main Inspectorate for Ports and Navigation of the former Merchant Fleet Ministry, now head of the Main Inspectorate for Merchant Navigation, River Navigation and Port Control of the Merchant and River Fleet Ministry. [redacted] Polkovskiy said that "Conventional Signs for Sea Charts and Maps" was the most comprehensive and perfect guidebook published so far. He said it was very carefully prepared and that the most qualified specialists of the Naval Forces and Merchant Fleet helped in its preparation. Polkovskiy personally shared in the preparation of this guidebook. It should be pointed out that the last issue of the guidebook /prior to the 1947 issue/ "Conventional Signs for Sea Charts and Maps" had been published as far back as 1941. Until 1951 conventional signs on all sea charts were plotted according to the guidebook issued in 1947. Indeed, practical use of this guidebook proved the good quality of the work and up to and including 1951 the question of revising it, especially with regard to conventional signs for sea charts, never arose. The only shortcoming was that the guidebook was published in a limited quantity of copies. [redacted] there were complaints from Maritime Inspection officials to the effect that it was difficult to obtain the book. 25X1
6. [redacted] the guidebook "Conventional Signs for Maritime Charts and Maps. [redacted] 1947 guidebook issued by the Hydrographic Bureau of the Navy), which had the following particulars in the designations of characteristics and coloring of lights: 25X1

(A) The color of lights on charts is designated by the proper color, except white, which is represented as yellow. Lights may be represented in their original shape, as concentric circles, or in abbreviated form by the V sign, according to the scale, accuracy and purpose of the chart.

(B) The nature of the light is illustrated by circles in different degrees of thickness and the number of circles. In terms of thickness, only two types of circles are accepted:

Thick circle, thickness about 1 mm.
Thin circle, thickness about 0.25 mm.

By means of these circles the characteristics of lights are shown in the following manner:


- (a) Constant lights are designated by one thick circle.
- (b) The following are designated by one thick circle outside and one thin circle inside.
 - (1) Constant lights alternating with flashing lights,
 - (2) Constant lights alternating with series of light flashes,
 - (3) Constant eclipsing lights,
 - (4) Constant series of eclipsing lights.

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- (c) Eclipsing lights and series of eclipsing lights are designated by one thin circle.
- (d) Serial flashing lights are designated by two, three and four thin circles with two, three and four flashes in the series.
- (e) The following are designated by five thin circles:
 - (1) Flashing lights,
 - (2) Serial flashing lights, if there are five or more flashes in the series,
 - (3) Revolving lights.
- (f) The following are designated by one thick circle and outside of it, one thin circle:
 - (1) Intermittent lights,
 - (2) Intermittent-flashing lights,
 - (3) Intermittent-serial-flashing lights,
 - (4) Intermittent-eclipsing lights,
 - (5) Intermittent-serial-eclipsing lights.
- (g) Radio beacon lights, regardless of whatever color they are painted, are shown by one thick red-colored circle.
- (h) Lightship lights are shown by means of the same signs as shown for shore-stationed lights.
- (i) Light-buoy lights are designated on all charts in abbreviated form, that is by the  sign.

(C) The navigating channel depth designation was changed in the guidebook. For instance, where formerly the figure 7.0 - enclosed in round brackets and placed in the break of the punctured line representing the navigational channel - meant that this navigational channel was suitable for navigation of vessels with up to 7 meters draft, this same figure now means that 7.0 meters is the minimum depth of the navigating channel. By the same token, the figure 10.0 - enclosed in square brackets and placed in the break of the solid line which designates the dredged navigational channel, - now represents the depth to which the navigational channel was dredged and not the maximum draft of vessels navigating the channel in question.

(D) Not lighted beacons are designated now by a black equilateral triangle with a white circle in the center; the site of the beacon is shown on the chart as being in the center of this circle, ie center of the triangle. Formerly not lighted beacons were given on the charts as black triangles and the beacons' site on the chart was considered to be the middle of the triangle's base.

(E) The coast line (dry land) is represented now by means of outlining the land strips by heavier dotting from the seaward side of land strips with designation of the type of bottom and elevation of land above sea level.

These are the most important rules of the guidebook "Conventional Signs for Sea Charts and Maps," published by the Hydrographic Bureau of the USSR Naval Forces in 1947 and, according to the articles in the "Vodnyy Transport" gazette No 52, these rules apply at present /1953/ without any kind of changes having been made.

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